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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 006581

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SUBJECT: JORDAN'S JOINT COMMISSION AGENDA

REF: AMMAN 6517

1. (u) Summary: Jordan's government and private sector have developed an ambitious schedule of events in support of the December 11 U.S.-Jordan FTA Joint Commission meeting (detailed schedule below). Their plan envisages three days of FTA-related meetings and press events to raise awareness of the FTA among a broader U.S. audience. Jordanian Ambassador to the U.S. Karim Kavar will be a central organizing point for the Jordanians and is likely to contact addressees to begin organizing many of these events. We will continue to support JC preparations as we count down to December 11. End summary.

2. (u) Following is an outline of the GOJ's and the Jordanian private sector's proposals for the Joint Commission and related events. We have tried to highlight areas of Washington agency interest/assistance, and we will be happy to help coordinate these events as well. Please note that, prior to the JC events, the private sector delegation will have been participating in a USAID-funded study tour targeting capacity-building for Jordanian trade associations. Stops in the study tour prior to the JC include a meeting with the Economic Club of Detroit, at which Jordanian Trade Minister Salah al Bashir is slated to give an address.

3. (u) Begin Washington Agenda:

Wednesday, December 11 (OFFICIAL JC DATE AS PROPOSED BY MoIT)

0900 - Digital video conference. The technical details of the conference are being handled by the Jordan Investment Board (Lama Mahadeen, email: lama(at)jib.com.jo). The DVC will link Amman with Washington and five regional Arab capitals. The DVC concept is to start with introductory remarks by King Abdullah, followed by brief remarks by USTR Zoellick and Minister Bashir, followed by three pre-scripted questions from remote participants, which either Zoellick or Bashir will answer. Total time for the event would be about 30 minutes. FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: We need confirmation that a DVC facility will be reserved for that day/time, and we need to get the DVC technical team in Washington in contact with Mahadeen in Amman.

0930-1230 - Joint Commission Senior-Level Meeting. We have been promised a detailed agenda by the GOJ by the end of the week, which we will forward to Washington soonest. We expect this meeting to end with a press event. Bashir has suggested that the press event could include announcements by PhRMA and Albemarle about their activities in Jordan. Albemarle has recently begun exporting bromine from its Dead Sea facility, and is looking for a public forum to announce the development, while PhRMA reps informed the Ambassador in October that several member companies are ready to announce new cooperative ventures with Jordanian partners. In addition to this, we expect there will be some sort of joint statement issued by USTR and the Jordanian delegation following the JC talks. FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: Ambassador Kavar should be in contact soon with USTR staff to work out the press event. We will forward the GOJ's agenda and official delegation list as soon as we receive them. If there will be a joint statement, we should be prepared to share a draft with Bashir soonest.

1230-1430 - Lunch co-hosted by JABA (Jordan's local Amcham) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce (tentative). JABA is trying to schedule this lunch, but has received a lukewarm response from the Chamber due to the Chamber's sensitivity over labor and environmental provisions of the FTA and their impact on new FTA's. FOLLOW-UP ACTION: We suggest that State coordinate with the U.S. Chamber to secure agreement to hold the lunch. A senior USG official (tbd) is likely to be asked by the U.S. Chamber to make remarks.

1430-1730 - Joint Commission technical-level meetings. The GOJ has indicated an interest in conducting working-level discussions on (at least) rules of origin and environmental

issues as provided for in the FTA text and side letters.  
FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: We will forward the GOJ's delegation list and proposed agenda as soon as we receive it, and will coordinate meetings with GOJ counterparts.

December 11 Afternoon (time tbd) - Globe Trade Event at Jordanian Embassy. This is primarily a match-making event for the private sector, organized by the Jordanian Embassy.

Thursday, December 12

0900-1100 - DoC-hosted roundtable for Jordanian trade associations and U.S. counterparts. We have forwarded a concept paper to DoC to begin thinking on organizing such an event, which would focus on FTA awareness-raising, association-level matchmaking, and promotion of the American-Jordanian Exhibition slated for March 2003. The GOJ expressed hope Secretary Evans would have time to briefly address the roundtable alongside Minister Bashir. There would also be a public statement following the event, optimally to announce the creation of a U.S. counterpart to the Jordanian FTA coordinating committee ("TIJARA"), which is comprised of interested Jordanian trade and professional associations. FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: Once we have received the Jordanian delegation list, we will work with DoC to identify appropriate U.S. association counterparts and encourage their participation.

Lunchtime - Minister Bashir address to National Press Club (tentative) - Bashir has expressed interest in addressing the Club. Ambassador Kavar should follow up from the Jordanian embassy to coordinate this event.

Additional events: Bashir is seeking meetings with OPIC, USDA, and Treasury, probably to discuss project finance, food aid, and bilateral tax treaties, respectively. OPIC, USDA and Treasury should expect calls from Ambassador Kavar to arrange those meetings, likely on the 12th. We have conveyed to Bashir the complexities of starting negotiations on a tax treaty, and expect him to name a legal expert to the delegation for that purpose.

Friday, December 13

Breakfast co-hosted by the World Trade Centers (WTC), the National U.S.-Arab Chambers of Commerce (NUSACC), and the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC). This event is being coordinated through the Amman World Trade Center and the Jordanian embassy in Washington. USG officials will likely be invited.

1000-1215 - QIZ event hosted by Dept of State (tentative). Per Ref A, a group of QIZ managers, investors, and GOJ officials, including Bashir, are interested in holding a QIZ event to jump-start investment and allay retailer concerns about political risk factors in Jordan. The group hopes to secure the participation of U/S Larson in this event. FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: State to coordinate event with help from Embassy Amman.

Afternoon - JABA-led "door knock" on Capitol Hill (tentative). This will be coordinated by JABA and the Jordanian embassy in Washington. We will also pass to State a list of Hill leaders the delegation would like to meet once we receive it. Please note Bashir has expressed interest in attending the door knock.

End agenda.

14. (u) Press plan: Embassy is preparing a press plan for the lead-up to the JC, JC-related events, and follow-up press coverage in Jordan. FOLLOW-UP ACTION REQUIRED: The JC is an excellent opportunity to highlight Jordan as a successful example of USG trade policy. We recommend PA officers from interested Washington agencies coordinate with the Jordanian embassy press office to ensure adequate coverage of the JC.

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